

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 228483

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MOPS, MARR, KS, US

SUBJ: MILITARY EXERCISES IN ROK

REF: (A) TOKYO 14814; (B) SEOUL 646; (C) SEOUL 7673

1. AS RESULT OF SEVERAL POSTPONEMENTS DURING PAST YEAR
SEVERAL SIGNIFICANT MILITARY EXERCISES NOW TENTATIVELY
PLANNED FOR EARLY 1974. SOME OF THESE -- FOAL EAGLE
(EARLY 74), FLY-AWAY 74 (1/27-2/9), FREEDOM TORCH (2/19-
22), AND CAPTIVE LIGHTNING I (4/74) -- INVOLVE DEPLOYMENT
OF US FORCES TO KOREA.

2. OUR IMMEDIATE INTEREST IS IN FLYAWAY (1/27-2/9)
AND FREEDOM TORCH (2/18-22). BEFORE DISCUSSING THEM
WITH DOD WE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE YOUR VIEWS ON PROPOSED
SCHEDULING, AND ASSESSMENT OF THEIR EFFECTS IN POST-
UNGA PERIOD.

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3. WE ALSO NEED TO KNOW ROKG REACTION. IS THERE

PRESSURE FOR RESUMPTION OF EXERCISES? WOULD THEY
WELCOME, RESIST, OR FEEL OBLIGED TO GO ALONG WITH
PLANNED HEAVY SCHEDULE?

4. BEYOND THE IMMEDIATE ISSUE, WE WOULD APPRECIATE
YOUR SUGGESTIONS ON HOW PRESENT SITUATION, IN WHICH
EXERCISES MAY DRAW MORE ATTENTION THAN THEY MERIT SIMPLY

BECAUSE NONE HAVE BEEN HELD FOR TWO YEARS, CAN BE AVOIDED
IN FUTURE. WE RECOGNIZE MILITARY AND POLITICAL VALUE OF
JOINT EXERCISES SO LONG AS US FORCES REMAIN IN KOREA.
EVEN WHEN FORCES ARE REDUCED, EXERCISES MAY BE REQUIRED
TO MAINTAIN CREDIBLE CAPABILITY FOR REDEPLOYMENT.
HOLDING PERIODIC EXERCISES MAY IN FACT SERVE TO
MINIMIZE POSSIBILITY FOR MISUNDERSTANDING, SINCE
ABSENCE OR STEP-UP OF EXERCISES COULD BOTH CONVEY MIS-
LEADING IMPRESSION OF US ATTITUDES AND INTENTIONS. WE
ALSO RECOGNIZE POTENTIAL POLITICAL LIABILITIES FOR
OURSELVES AND THE RISK OF LARGE, WELL-PUBLICIZED EX-
ERCISES PARTICULARLY IN TERMS OF ANNUAL UNGA DEBATE
AS WELL AS POST UN POLITICAL CLIMATE. THE NATURE AND
TIMING OF JOINT EXERCISES THEREFORE MAY BE CRITICAL.

5. FOR TOKYO: SUGGEST ANY DISCUSSION WITH GOJ BE
CAVEATED ALONG LINES REFTTEL (C). KISSINGER

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